4:Mickey E-5 (1940-?) 1947 AE5 Miao AE5

The villages of Sze-nan and San-kioh both are important lumber centers. 313

Tigers are reported in the northeastern part of the province. There are also said to be wolves, wild boars, white pheasants, and giant salamanders. I have seen wild cats in the hills and rabbits for sale in the market at Kweiyang. There are many domestic animals, including "yellow cows," water buffalo, pigs, sheep, goats, ducks, geese, and chickens. The first two are used as draft animals, for plowing. There are no full-sized horses, but ponies and small mules are used as pack animals. 136 231

In mineral wealth Kweichow is considered to have greater possibilities than any other province of China. Coal is common and may be had for merely scratching the surface. The richest mercury mines in the world are in Kweichow. It is the only mineral exported, although from the iron in Wei-ning cooking vessels are manufactured which are sold all over Yünnan, as well as Kweichow. In addition, there are gold, silver, copper, and nitrate of potash in sufficient quantities to warrant mining them. 135

The province should also be of great interest to botanists. I met in Kweiyang an Austrian who had collected over three hundred species of plants. As I went to market from the mountain village in which I was living to Lung-li I would count the flowering plants I saw. There were never fewer than thirty in blossom, many times more than fifty. At times the hills would be rosy with azaleas, at other times blue with bluebells of several kinds, while during their season more than a hundred white lilies would be in view at certain points. Hedges of wild roses border some of the paths. There are wild fruit trees, berries, and flowering vines. Nearly every flowering plant we grow with much care in our gardens is found wild on the Kweichow mountains. 137

/341 cont./

224 accompanying me had sought refuge weeks and months ago when they were attacked by wounded gaur. The hunters had succeeded in escaping behind the tree trunk, but the horns of the raging wild oxen had penetrated into the trunks to a depth of ten centimeters.

Despite all their courage, stalking is seldom successful, since the density of the forest permits shots at only a few meters' distance, but the hunter betrays his presence to the animal at more than 100 meters by the noise which he cannot avoid making. Under these circumstances lying in ambush at the haunts or watering places of game is much more promising. For the big cats that have seized a head of livestock, the Meau build themselves a high place near the carcass for an ambush. If the hunters, however, succeed /342/ in finding a [135] salt spring such as sometimes occurs in northern Thailand, the Meau are often able to bag considerable game by this [136] method. Here the Meau successfully hunt even gaur, tigers, and the Indian rhinoceros, a few specimens of which lead a hidden existence there.

Elephant hunting is usually practiced among the Meau by stalking, since the pachyderms are not very sensitive to noise. [237] For this, however, the hunters smear fresh elephant dung all over themselves, since they maintain that with this masking scent they are able to approach the pachyderms, even in an adverse wind, up to a distance of only 15 steps. Although I could not decide in favor of this method myself, I believe that this assertion is quite possible.

In their ambush the Meau often use all kinds of lures about five centimeters and more in size (Fig. 257), in order to attract the game. In this connection a tree fruit is used as a vibrating pellet in the bamboo body of the instrument. During the rutting season the call of the female animal is imitated with blades of grass and leaves, which are clamped between the two thumbs, in order to attract the male muntjac. Similar methods are used for deer and many other game animals. Small beasts of prey are lured by means of the sound of a dying

262 /374 cont./

252 Bamboo sprouts, which are cut up and cooked in water,
[351] are very popular. Furthermore, both in the rice fields and in
[245] the small house-gardens, the Meau plant bananas and pomelos, which are only eaten raw, whereas bananas are also roasted or fried in fat. In the gardens or in the poppy fields three varieties
263 of pepper are cultivated, which, like the hot chilies and a whole series of wild fruits, likewise dried and pulverized, are used as spices.

251 The Meau also preserve meat, and, to be sure, either by
[317] /375/ salting it or they let it dry in the sun or smoke it over the
[135] fire. Although salt springs occur naturally in northern Thailand
[171] and the Meau can also observe how the neighboring Lao obtain
[439] salt at such places, the salt needed is purchased from the traders (see the chapter, "Trade") and not obtained locally.

252 Sugar cane is either eaten raw or sugar is made from it,
[262] which plays an important role among the Meau. For this the sugar cane is peeled and cut into small pieces and pounded in the rice mortar. The mass is then cooked for hours in large pans until it is brown and begins to harden.

The Meau also know how to prepare yeast. For this purpose the granular seeds of a leafy plant are pulverized and kneaded to a dough with water. Some of the residue from the last alcohol distillation is added, and everything is left to ferment together for three or four days. Now the mass is dried in the sun or over the fire and finally poured into bamboo flasks
[251] where it is said to keep, ready for use, up to two years.

From all these ingredients, and, I might say, basic foods, the Meau know how to make many composite dishes, a number of which can be called national dishes.

[262] For festive days cakes (tsŭă) are made, three kinds of which are known.

1. Glutinous rice is ground to a fine flour. Now one takes nine parts of this flour and mixes it with one part of cooked and ground tubers. With the addition of water and a little sugar, the dough is kneaded, out of which small flat loaves about 12 centimeters in diameter are made. These are wrapped in green leaves and steamed.